

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 EB-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00 COME-00
AGRE-00 /085 W

-----077368 210248Z /63

R 200420Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8924
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 0089

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1, 4 DIMPTD
TAGS: PDEV PDIP EAID LA ID
SUBJECT: LAO-INDONESIAN RELATIONS

REF: A 77 VIENTIANE 1102, B 77 VIENTIANE 1144

INTRODUCTION: THERE FOLLOWS AN OVERVIEW OF INDONESIAN-
LAO RELATIONS DRAWN FROM OBSERVATIONS MADE BY A SENIOR
DIPLOMAT IN THE INDONESIAN EMBASSY IN VIENTIANE.
SEPARATE MESSAGES DEAL WITH LAO RELATIONS WITH EACH OF
THE OTHER ASEAN STATES WITH MISSIONS IN VIENTIANE. WE
WILL SUBMIT A FINAL SUMMARY OF LAO-ASEAN RELATIONS.
END INTRODUCTION.

1. INDONESIAN-LAO RELATIONS APPEAR TO REFLECT PRIMARI-
LY INDONESIA'S POLITICAL INTEREST IN THE REGION. INDO-
NESIAN DIPLOMATS HERE CLEARLY FEEL THEMSELVES TO BE
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FIRST AMONG EQUALS AMONG THOSE ASEAN STATES WITH
DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS IN VIENTIANE. THE INDONESIAN
EMBASSY PUBLISHES A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER WHICH REGULARLY
CARRIES NEWS OF ASEAN ACTIVITIES AND WHICH ON OCCASION
HAS RESPONDED TO LAO AND VIETNAMESE ATTACKS ON ASEAN.

2. A SENIOR INDONESIAN DIPLOMAT IN VIENTIANE HAS TOLD

US THAT "VIETNAM CONTROLS LAOTIAN POLICY IN ALL FIELDS"
AKD HAT "WITHOUT THE VIETNAMESE ARMY IN LAOS, THE
PRESENT LAO GOVERNMENT WOULD FALL."

3. THE DIPLOMAT SAID THAT THERE WERE NO OUTSTANDING
PROBLEMS BETWEEN LAOS AND INDONESIA. LAO AND VIETNAMESE
SUGGESTIONS THAT SOME ASEAN STATES WERE NOT FULLY
INDEPENDENT AND LAO AND VIETNAMESE APPARENT INTEREST IN
INTERFERING IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF OTHER NATIONS
WERE, HOWEVER, FREQUENTLY TOPICS IN LAO-INDONESIAN
DISCUSSIONS (REF A, B).

4. HE SAID THAT SICE BANGKOK HAD NOT SEEN FIT TO
ACCUSE THE LAO OR VIETNAMESE OF DIRECT SUPPORT OF
COMMUNIST INSURGENTS OPEATING IN THE THAI NORTH AND
NORTHEAST, INDONESIA COULD NOT CONSIDER SUCH ALLEGED
LAO-VIETNAMESE ACTIVITY AS BEIN A FACTOR IN LAO-
INDONESIAN RELATIONS. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT IF CLEAR
EVIDENCE OF SUCH ACITIVTY WERE PRODUCED, THEN LAOS (AND
VIETNAME) WOULD BE GUILTY OF INTERFERING IN THE AFFAIRS
OF A THIRD COUNTRY (WHICH HAPPENED TO BE A FRIEND
OF INDONESIA) AND INDONESIA WOULD HAVE TO RESPOND
ACCORDINGLY.

5. HE SAID THAT INDONESIA WAS ALSO DISPLEASED WITH THE
LPDR'S VOTE AGAINST INDONESIA IN THE UN ON THE ISSUE OF
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TIMOR, BUT HE NOTED THAT UNLIKE VIETNAM, LAOS DID NOT
PROPAGANDIZE THE ISSUE IN ITS PRESS. THE MALAYSIAN
SPONSORED (AND INDOESIAN SUPPORTED) PROPOSAL FOR A
ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM AND NEUTRALITY IN TH REGION WAS
NOT CURRENTLY AN ISSUE IN INDONESIAN-LAO RELATIONS,
ACCORDING TO THE DIPLOMAT.

6. A NON-INDONESIAN DIPLOMAT TOLD US THAT THE INDO-
NESIAN GOVERNMENT EARLY IN 1977 HAD ISSUED AN INVITA-
TION FOR LPDR FOREIGN MINISTER PHOUNE SIPRASEUTH TO
VISIT INDONESIA BUT THAT THIS INVITATION WAS NOT ACTED
UPON BY THE LAO. IT WAS APPARENTLY WITHDRAWN IN MID
1977.

7. IN 1975, INDOESIA GRANTEDFUS \$1 MILLION TO THE LAO
TO BE USED FOR PURCHASES OF VARIOUS COMMODITIES. HALF
OF THE AID WAS TO BE SPENT ON INDONESIAN PRODUCTS, AND
HALF ON PRODUCTS FROM OTHER SOURCES. ALL BUT APPROXI-
MATELY 300,000 DOLLARS HAS BEEN SPENT AND THE REST
REMAINS TO BE SPENT ON INDONESIAN PRODUCTS. THE LAO,
HOWEVER, HAVE BEEN SLOW IN PRESENTING LISTS OF THOSE
PRODUCTS THEY ARE SEEKING. THE INDONESIAN DIPLOMAT

SAID THAT THE MONEY COULD NOT BE SPENT ON RICE SINCE THE INDONESIANS WERE SHORT OF RICE THEMSELVES AND WERE IMPORTING FROM THE PHILIPPINES. EARLIER, THE INDO-NESIAN AMBASSADOR TOLD US THAT AS A NET FOOD IMPORTER, INDONESIA COULD NOT GIVE FOOD AID TO THE LPDR IN RESPONSE TO THE LPDR'S JANUARY DROUGHT EMERGENCY FOOD AID APPEAL. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT INDONESIA MIGHT BE ABLE TO GIVE SMALL DIESEL ENGINES FOR IRRIGATION PUMPS. HE ALSO NOTED THAT INDONESIA HAD GOOD SUPPLIES OF FERTILIZER MADE FROM NATURAL GAS.

8. INDONESIA HAS VIRTUALLY NO COMMERCIAL OR CONSULAR RELATIONS WITH THE LAO.

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9. COMMENT: AS SUGGESTED REFTELS, THE INDONESIAN MISSION IN VIENTIANE IS ACTIVE IN SUPPORTING ASEAN INTERESTS AND PROMOTING SOLIDARITY AMONG THE ASEAN MISSIONS IN VIENTIANE. THE INDONESIANS SEEM TO HAVE FEW ILLUSIONS ABOUT THE ROLE OF THE VIETNAMESE IN LAOS OR ABOUT THE REGIONAL ROLE THAT FALLS TO THEM BY VIRTUE OF THEIR SIZE AND INFLUENCE IN THE THIRD WORLD.
ROBERTS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978VIENTI00089
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780031-0995
Format: TEL
From: VIENTIANE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780137/aaaabfni.tel
Line Count: 144
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 7d0ac7e1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3735819
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LAO-INDONESIAN RELATIONS
TAGS: PDEV, PDIP, EAID, PEPR, LA, ID
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7d0ac7e1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014